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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAN SALVADOR 003439

SIPDIS

FOR SECRETARY DEPUTY SECRETARY AND NSA HADLEY FROM THE  
AMBASSADOR  
STATE PASS USTR FOR RVARGO

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/07/2015

TAGS: [ES](#) [ETRD](#) [PREL](#) [CAFTA](#)

SUBJECT: CAFTA-DR ENTRY INTO FORCE

Classified By: Ambassador H. Douglas Barclay. Reason: 1.4 (d)

1. (C) I think it is critical that El Salvador's successful efforts to meet CAFTA-DR requirements be recognized by entry-into-force of the agreement on January 1. Observing this deadline will acknowledge the efforts of the Saca Government (as well as neighboring governments who cross the finish line) to complete preparations for CAFTA, while maintaining momentum for the President's free-trade program here in the region and elsewhere in the Americas. We should use the offer of a certain January 1 entry into force date to secure commitments on final outstanding issues but not let technical details get in the way of our larger goals. Just as we ask for El Salvador to show leadership in making the changes important for CAFTA, so should the United States continue to show the leadership that is so important now. January 1 entry into force would have the specific advantage of forcing other CAFTA signatories to accelerate and complete legislation that ensures compliance with their commitments under the treaty. They will not want to be on the outside looking in.

2. (C) Saca's El Salvador is a beacon of pro-Americanism in a region vulnerable to internal and external pressures contrary to U.S. interests. His outspoken support of the FTAA concept and El Salvador's contribution of troops to Iraq have been of great importance to us. The principal concrete benefit to El Salvador of Saca's support for US policy has been the trade benefits of CAFTA. We would be making a mistake by delaying these benefits just as the friendliest government in the region launches its campaign for the March 2006 elections.

Barclay

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